

App. No.: 10/613,911
Atty. Doc. No.: D03041

REMARKS

This reply is responsive to the Office Action mailed on November 22, 2005. A request for a three-month extension of time is included with this response. Claims 1 and 3-10 are pending in the application. The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3-10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neuman et al. (Kerberos: An Authentication Service for Computer Networks, published September 1994) in view of Rich et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0078243, published June 20, 2002).

In response, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 5 only to correct informalities. As such, Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 3-10 stand rejected under U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of Neuman et al. (Kerberos: An Authentication Service for Computer Networks, published September 1994) (Neuman) in view of Rich et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0078243, published June 20, 2002) (Rich). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Neuman discloses the Kerberos authentication service and its limitations. "Kerberos is a distributed authentication service that allows a process (a client) running on behalf of a principle (a user) to prove its identity to a verifier (an application server, or just server) without sending data across the network that might allow an attacker or the verifier to subsequently impersonate the principal. Kerberos optionally provides integrity and confidentiality for data sent between the client and server." (Neuman, page 2, "The Kerberos Authentication Service")

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The Examiner's attention is directed to the fact that Neuman fails to disclose "a time server ticket", as recited in Applicant's independent claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 recites:

1. A method for providing a secure time signal from a time source to a time requestor over a digital network, the method comprising:
 - sending a requestor identification to an authentication server;
 - receiving a public key from the authentication server;
 - sending a request for a time server ticket;
 - receiving the request for the time server ticket;
 - using the time server ticket to request the secure time signal wherein the time server ticket includes an identification of the requestor and a session key for transferring the secure time signal. (emphasis added)

The present invention discloses the use of a secure time protocol to provide client devices, or users, with secure time signals. In one embodiment, the secure time signals are provided by a secure time server so that multiple clients can be time-synchronized, if desired.

In contrast, although, Neuman discloses a "Kerberos ticket", there is no disclosure, teaching, or suggestion of a "time server ticket". The lack of a time server ticket in Neuman was conceded by the Examiner. In order to cure the Examiner's perceived deficiency of Neuman, Rich is cited.

Rich discloses "a method, apparatus, and computer implemented instructions for synchronizing time in a network data processing system. A request for time synchronization is received at a target data processing system. A current target time at the target data processing system is placed in a reply. The reply is sent to the source data processing system. A current source time from when the reply is received at the source data processing system is compared to the current target time to generate a comparison. A synchronization factor is generated using the comparison." (Rich, Abstract)

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Rich fails to cure the deficiencies of Neuman. In fact, both Rich and Neuman are devoid of the teaching, suggestion, or disclosure of a time server ticket. The passages of Rich referred to by the Examiner (Rich, paragraphs [0034] and [0045]) fail to disclose a time server ticket. Rich discloses the receipt of time synchronization information from a key distribution center (KDC) server. Moreover, Rich teaches that a time server is not used in its mechanism ("This mechanism avoids the dependency upon other systems or protocols to achieve synchronization of time on different processing systems. **This mechanism does not rely on a time server and is dynamic in adjusting time.**" Rich, paragraph [0054]). As such, Rich teaches away from the use of a time server ticket.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 is patentable over Neuman in view of Rich. As such, claims 3-10 are patentable at least by virtue of depending from their respective base claim. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

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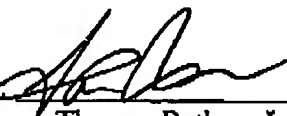
Conclusion

Having fully responded to the Final Office action, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Should any issues arise that prevent allowance of the above application, the examiner is invited contact the undersigned to resolve such issues.

To the extent an extension of time is needed for consideration of this response, Applicant hereby requests such extension and, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge deposit account number 502117 for any fees associated therewith.

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Respectfully submitted,

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